



EXCERPT



Hold That Thought *Sorting Through the Voices in Our Heads*

September 20, 2022 | \$18, 192 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-3169-2

The voices we have in our heads often push us to act in ways that are unhelpful and unsustainable. How do we quiet these narratives and hear the voice of God amid the chatter? Gem Fadling helps us identify the competing voices and shares wisdom of how we can make sense of inner voices and settle down enough to find our true voice.

“You Are Not Your Thoughts”

You are not your thoughts. The first time I heard this wisdom from the desert fathers and mothers, I was stumped. These are my words, my commentary, and my voice. Of course, my thoughts are me. But even though I barely understood what it meant at the time, something about this insight rang true. Another way to say this in the positive is, *you are more than your thoughts.* As I began to take in this reality, a huge sheet of glacial ice slid from the mountain of my understanding about what goes on inside my own head.

At the onset of a triggering event, I easily move into a series of thoughts. The Anxious Controller joins in chorus with the Inner Critic, and these thoughts (which we will identify synonymously as “voices”) lead to unhelpful emotions. Before I know it, I’m on an unwilling slide into pushing, trying, or angsting. But I am not my thoughts; that voice I hear is not necessarily my truest self; and I do, in fact, have a choice about my response.

Of course, by now, many of us have a rudimentary understanding of what is occurring in our brains because of the developments in the field of neuroscience. We have learned, with great delight, that we can change our brains. Neuroplasticity shows the patterns that have formed can be renewed. We no longer believe in being stuck. We can pick up the needle and move it into a new groove, one that we create with new thoughts! Sounds simple, but it is far from easy. It takes a great amount of courage and effort to become open to change, aware of your thoughts, and willing to do something about them.

Romans 12:2 says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This is a beautiful invitation to engage thought work. And yet it is in the passive: “Be transformed.” We are reminded to cooperate with God’s work of making all things new within us. Engagement with this transforming process is much more fruitful than heeding the advice of the Positive Thinker, who isn’t always grounded in reality, or the Passive Spectator, who prefers to play it safe. I needed to learn a way to manage my thinking so I wouldn’t fall prey to stress the same way in the future. I carried my prayer for help all the way to Italy, and God met me there.

He invited me to stop pushing, trying, and angsting. He invited me to pause and remember that *I already have what I need.* I can finally take off that dense wet blanket of angst and relax into the love of God. Then, I can begin to experience Jesus as the Prince of Peace, and I realize I can learn to cope with my life with greater ease.

—Adapted from chapter one, “You Are More Than Your Thoughts”



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



Hold That Thought ***Sorting Through the Voices in Our Heads***

September 20, 2022 | \$18, 192 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-3169-2

Gem Fadling, CLC, is a founding partner of Unhurried Living Inc., a non-profit that trains people to rest deeper, live fuller, and lead better. She is a certified life coach and a trained spiritual director who coaches women at the intersection of spiritual leadership and soul care. Gem is the host of the *I Can Do That!* podcast and the coauthor of *What Does Your Soul Love? Eight Questions That Reveal God's Work in You*.

Notice, Discern, and Respond to Your Thoughts

What kind of work intrigues you the most and how did diving into that work inspire you to write this book?

Gem Fadling: I have long been intrigued by thought work. Words buzz around our heads like flies, some of which I grab and create entire unhelpful narratives without a “second thought.” I’ve been learning to notice my own thoughts and have grown in my belief that I have choices about those thoughts as well as the actions flowing from my thoughts. In this book, I want to share my knowledge and experience with women who are tired of being overwhelmed by their thoughts. I desire to help them feel a sense of invitation and freedom to let go of unhelpful thoughts as they embrace their own God-given voice.

What is the main idea for this book and what makes it unique?

Gem: The focus of this book is the idea that you can notice, discern, and respond to your thoughts, moving from unhelpful thoughts and behaviors to helpful ones. All of this is buoyed by the love of God and your own engagement with your inner life.

As for what makes it unique, I am a practical soul. So, I share from my own life via stories and examples. I seek to come alongside the reader as a fellow traveler, not a lofty expert. I do share my expertise, but the tone is more coach/mentor-like, encouraging, “this is possible for you.” I strive to make things doable: small, simple, and gracious. I share my own life freely in here with anecdotes that show what my ideas look like in real life. If I can make my way through this work, so can you.

Who do you hope to encourage most throughout the pages of this book?

Gem: This book is for women. I hope to encourage women who want to know God more deeply and are leaning in. Some of them may be in various forms of deconstruction and reconstruction, and they want to know how to make actual progress in their spiritual lives. Others may be hungry for the ideals of an unhurried life, and they are attempting to live this way in whatever season they find themselves. Still others might be in the spiritual formation stream and have various levels of practice in this realm. Wherever they might be on their journey, I hope to provide them with a source of encouragement along the way.

What insights do you hope readers will gain from your book?

Gem: I hope these women learn that God’s love is the foundation on which they build. They are loved without question. They can notice, discern, and respond to their thoughts and find freedom in the process. They already have what they need to make progress (2 Peter 1:3). They have *choices* in regards to their thoughts and their behaviors. **And finally, I hope they learn that they can progressively uncover and begin to use their own God-given voice.**



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media